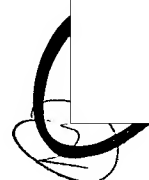




Directorate of
Intelligence

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Afghanistan Situation Report



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14 August 1984

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AFGHANISTAN SITUATION REPORT

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Ineffectiveness of Afghan officials has led Soviet advisers to assume greater responsibilities in the tribal area of eastern Afghanistan.

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Moscow's concerns about the war in Afghanistan continue to grow as aircraft losses dramatically increased and major combat operations failed to secure new areas.

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This document is prepared weekly by the Office of Near Eastern and South Asian Analysis and the Office of Soviet Analysis. Questions or comments on the issues raised in the publication should be directed

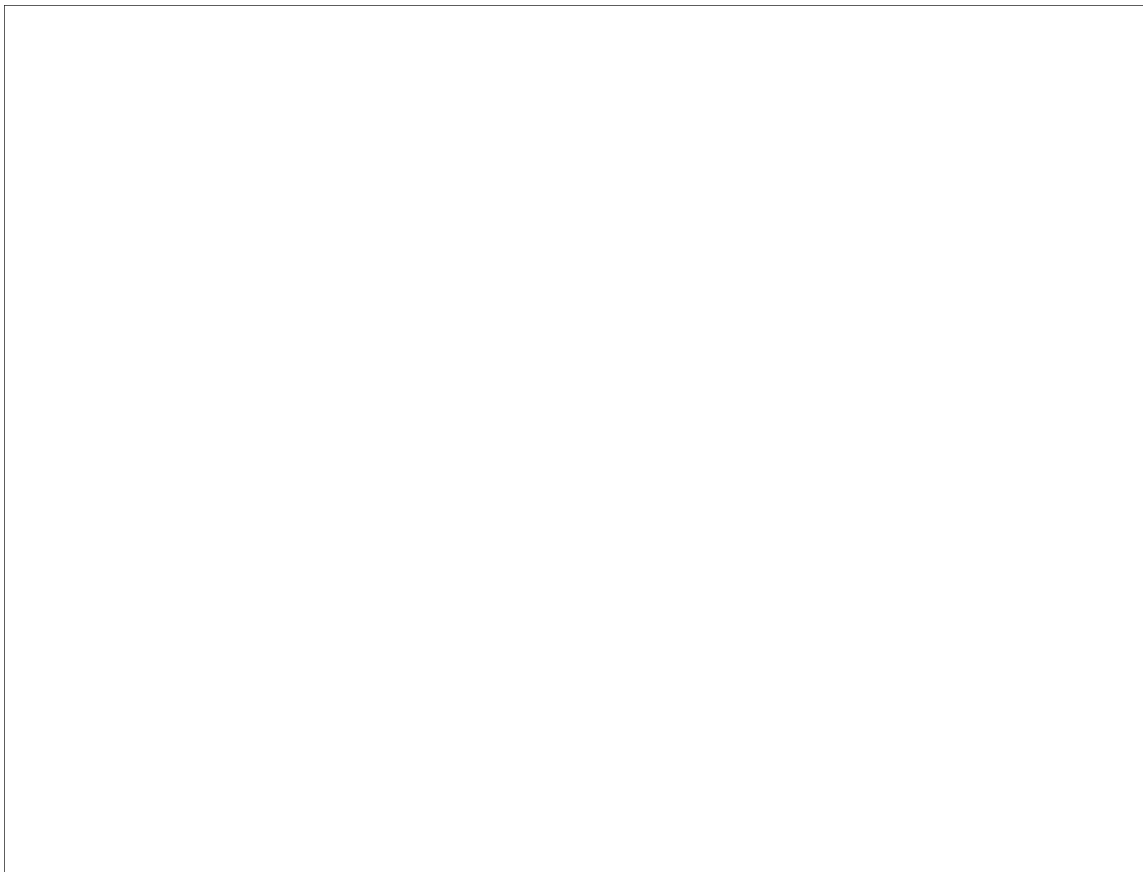
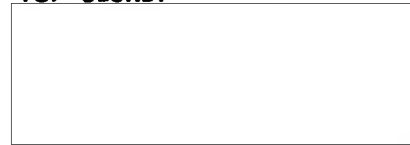
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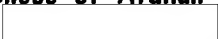
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GROWING SOVIET ROLE IN TRIBAL AREA

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 Soviet advisers are assuming greater responsibility for the tribal area in eastern Afghanistan. The Soviets, who had been concerned only with state and party affairs, are now working at village level, negotiating directly with village and tribal leaders, and are bypassing high level Afghan officials. Their actions reportedly are prompted by the ineffectiveness of Afghan officials resulting from party factionalism. 

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Comment:

Increased Soviet involvement in the tribal area is one more sign of the importance Moscow is attaching to stemming the flow of insurgents and supplies from Pakistan. The Soviet advisers' expanded role coincides with increased Soviet military actions in Paktia Province this summer and renewed efforts to buy tribal loyalties. The problems with party factionalism are unlikely to improve in the near term. Parchami officials have long met with difficulty in the region--a Khalqi stronghold since the days of Taraki and Amin.

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IN BRIEF

-- Last week Pravda charged that the US bears the "full weight of responsibility" for the "worsening of the situation" in the region around Afghanistan and said "new (Soviet) sacrifices" were in the offing. These statements are probably in response to US press reports that the US Senate had decided to allocate more aid to the Afghan resistance.

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PERSPECTIVE**AFGHANISTAN IN JULY**

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Moscow's concerns about the war in Afghanistan continue to grow as Soviet officials issued a demarche to Pakistan, cancelled an official visit by a top-ranking Pakistani official, and increased discussion of the war in Soviet media.

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However, we believe these efforts will not help the Soviets remedy their main problems: a chronic inability to locate and engage the insurgents, ineffectively coordinated combat operations, and overall poor performance of their personnel.

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Growing Soviet Concerns

On 18 July, Moscow delivered a demarche to Pakistan to cease assisting the Afghan resistance. Pakistani officials noted that this demarche was different because it asserted that Pakistani actions constituted a direct threat to Soviet civilians and military personnel serving in Afghanistan. In addition, the Soviets cancelled the scheduled late July visit to Moscow of Pakistani Foreign Secretary Naik, with whom they had met in previous years. The Soviets explicitly linked the cancellation to Pakistan's Afghan policy.

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The demarche, to which the Soviets have not given any publicity, and the cancellation of Naik's visit to Moscow indicate increasing Soviet concern over the course of events in Afghanistan. Growing Soviet media coverage of the Afghan war also suggests increasing Soviet concern. In conversations with US Embassy officials in Moscow, Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials indicated frustration about the continuing failure to defeat the Afghan insurgents or cut off the insurgents' international support.

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Soviet Weapons Changes

The Soviets continued to adjust weapons and tactics. [redacted]
[redacted] Soviets delivered 240-mm mortars, 152-mm guns, and 152-mm 2S3 self-propelled howitzers to artillery units, the first fielding of these weapons with Soviet forces in Afghanistan. The new artillery is more mobile and can fire heavier projectiles over longer ranges--as much as 18,500 meters for the howitzer. [redacted]

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The mid-July deployment of 46 MIG-23s fighters to Afghanistan to replace MIG-21s will not significantly improve Soviet capabilities against the insurgents, but probably will worry Pakistan. The MIG-23 represents an increased threat to Pakistan because it is more advanced,

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has a greater range, and can fire more modern air-to-air missiles than the MIG-21. [REDACTED]

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Soviet and Insurgent Operations

We believe operations during July supported Soviet objectives to deny the insurgents access to secure base areas, to disrupt insurgent supply routes, and to protect the Termez-Kabul highway. Soviet forces attempted to further consolidate their positions in the Panjsher, launched major attacks in the Shomali, attempted to penetrate the resistance in Paktia, and mounted sweep operations near the Salang Pass.

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Kabul

Insurgent activity in Kabul was high during the first week of the month, then abruptly dropped off until the end of July. The spate of assassinations of regime and party officials continued from June. Three assassinations and two bombings, one of which reportedly killed 23 people, occurred in early June. [REDACTED]

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The shortage of electricity in Kabul during early summer was the most severe in years, according to US Embassy officials. Since 14 July electric power has been shut off daily from 0800 to 1800. The major cause appears to be a shortage of water to drive hydroelectric power stations and a shortage of diesel fuel to run a new generating station. The water shortage this year reflects the lower than normal snowfall this past winter. [REDACTED]

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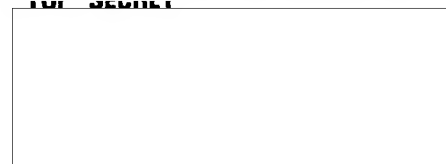
Shomali

The Soviets conducted major operations in the Shomali from mid- to late July. US Embassy officers reported a continuous stream of tanks, APCs, and trucks heading north from Kabul on 17 July. US Embassy officials also reported waves of rocket-laden helicopters traveling back and forth from Kabul to the Shomali on all but one day since 17 July. These operations probably were designed to reduce insurgent activity against nearby Bagram Airfield and along the main highway from Kabul. The major Soviet operations in the Paghman area begun in June ended by mid-July. [REDACTED]

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
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


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Panjsher


The Panjsher was relatively quiet in July. Soviet efforts concentrated on the lower valley to prevent reestablishment of insurgent bases and guard access to the Termez-Kabul highway. Meanwhile, the Soviets continue to search for the elusive Masood. 

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The regime's resettlement efforts continue to encounter resistance. Some 300 Panjsheris in Kabul were arrested when they refused to return to the valley. In another incident, the regime sent eight busloads of Panjsheris back to the valley; six returned to Kabul and two were captured by the insurgents. 

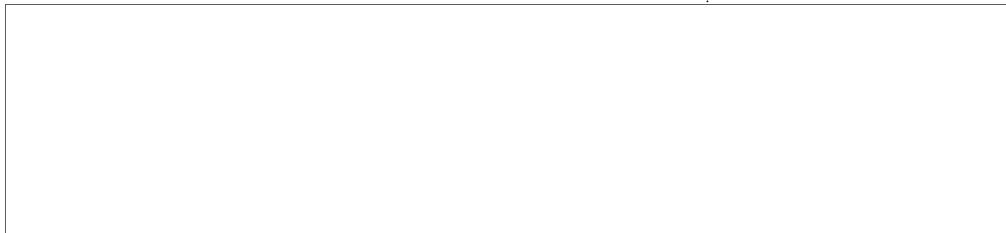
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Other Areas


The Soviets had no notable successes throughout the rest of Afghanistan. Soviet efforts to control areas used by insurgent convoys through Paktia led to heavy fighting there in mid-July, according to US Embassy sources. 

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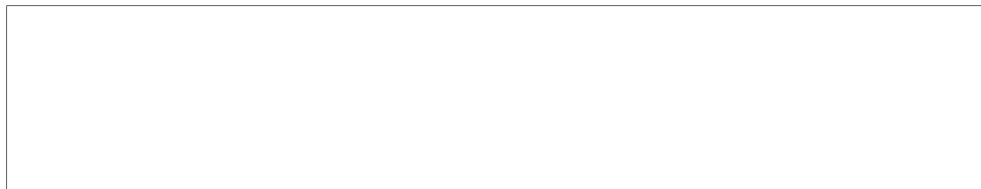


Outlook

Moscow's demarche to Islamabad reflects its frustration over the inconclusive Soviet offensives last spring, as well as its growing concern over increased aircraft losses. Past Soviet warnings have not been followed by significant border violations, but Moscow might now feel a need to teach Pakistan a lesson. 

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The Soviet operations in July have disrupted insurgent activities, but are unlikely to lead to regime or Soviet control for extended periods. The insurgents will probably return, as they have the past five years, when the Soviets and regime forces depart. In the Panjsher, increased insurgent activity during July concentrated on harassing Soviet and Afghan bases and convoys. However, the insurgents will be denied a major operational base in the main valley until the Soviet and regime troops abandon their garrisons.

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